# CHAPTER 13

# RADIO

In the preceding 12 chapters we covered the subjects that comprise roughly two-thirds of the journalist rating — print journalism and photography. Now we will examine the electronic media, beginning with the radio medium.

Although many of the techniques to be addressed also apply to television (Chapter 14), our emphasis in this chapter is on radio and the unique writing, announcing and technical requirements of which you must be aware.

## THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF RADIO

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Identify the basic elements of the radio medium.*

To use radio effectively as a Navy journalist, you must remember the following one essential fact and be constantly guided by it: radio is a medium of sound.

While people might hear without trying, they generally do not listen without being stimulated. Consequently, your job will be to stimulate them — to trigger their imagination so they can picture the event being described, a necessity for an attentive radio audience. To do this, you must use one or a combination of the following three basic elements:

- Voice
- Sound
- Music

### VOICE

The most important element of radio is voice, because it is generally the one used specifically to reach the listener with the desired information.

### SOUND

When used on radio, sound must be distinguished easily so the listener is able to interpret the sound and understand what is being conveyed. The roar of a jet engine and the muffled sounds of other flight deck activity will help the listener to visualize the scene.

### MUSIC

Music has a great suggestive power because it plays on human emotion and colors scenes. It touches the heart and mind and sets a desired mood. When properly used, these elements should accomplish the following three distinct purposes:

- Attracting immediate interest
- Maintaining that interest through a particular presentation
- Satisfying the audience's attention and curiosity

## RADIO WRITING TECHNIQUES

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Recognize the basic radio writing techniques.*

Radio writing techniques are designed to capture and hold the audience's attention until you have delivered your message. These six techniques are as follows:

- Aural sense appeal
- Rapid getaway
- Power of suggestion
- Pacing and timing
- Freedom of movement
- Conflict

### AURAL SENSE APPEAL

Radio depends entirely on the ear; it must work completely on the listener's mental image inspired by sound waves coming from the radio speaker.

### RAPID GETAWAY

Radio material must capture the attention of the audience within the first few moments of presentation or listeners will be lost. The material must present a challenge, a promise, a suggestion or a conflict to arouse the listener's attention.

## POWER OF SUGGESTION

The human mind is a vast storehouse of scenery. The radio writer suggests to the audience what the scene should be, and listeners — through their mind's eye — can see anything from a pinhole to Waikiki Beach.

## PACING AND TIMING

You must prepare the material for delivery within a definite time frame. Within this timeframe, the changes in quality, emotion, thought or feeling of the material are controlled.

## FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

As the radio writer, you can take listeners from one point on earth to another, or even into outer space with words, sound effects or the appropriate music.

## CONFLICT

Radio writers call conflict the backbone of interest in radio writing. Conflict is the ageless formula of hero against villain, good against evil, the fight for survival and the solution to difficult problems.

## RADIO NEWSWRITING

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Recognize the basic rules of radio newswriting.*

As a Navy journalist your first encounter with radio writing will probably be as a radio newswriter. In that assignment your job will be to meet the deadlines and rigid standards of the electronic media with the Navy's news story.

Radio news style, while dictated by the need for getting and holding the attention of an audience, differs from station to station. It is alive and constantly changing along with the broadcast industry itself.

As with most areas of journalism, there are few absolutes. When scripting broadcast copy, you will face many subjective choices that can only be made by using your own common sense.

The guidelines presented in this chapter are intended to be consistent with the style recommended by The Associated Press and United Press International. However, keep in mind that these guidelines are just that — guidelines. For your copy to serve any worthwhile purpose, it must be the kind of spots and releases the individual radio stations in your geographical area desire and are able to use. Most local broadcast stations have individual preferences regarding their newscasts and announcements. To be responsive, you must be willing to adapt to those preferences. Study the styles of the stations in your area. If your material does not meet the requirements of the stations you are attempting to serve, then make the necessary modifications.

Initially, be aware that writing for broadcast media is not the same as writing for print media. True, the same rules of accuracy, propriety and good taste apply; nevertheless, there are a number of differences, particularly in writing style. Your job is to tailor each release for the medium that will use it. A release sent to an area newspaper may be turned down by area broadcast stations if it is not rewritten in broadcast style.

Remember that any station is more likely to use your release if it is in a form that does not require the newscasters' reworking. Do not create extra work for the news outlet. This is a fundamental step and should be practiced by every public affairs office.

Broadcast writing is highly personalized — far different from writing for the print media. Broadcast copy is written and designed for the ear. It is personal and has a sense of immediacy. The listener becomes involved and feels as though he is a part of the event being reported.

## THE SIX Cs

In keeping with the requirements previously covered, your broadcast copy must measure up to the following six Cs:

- Clear
- Concise
- Complete
- Conversational
- Current
- Correct

### Clear

Clear copy is written in a simple, easy-to-understand manner. It is developed in a logical way, flows smoothly and is easy for the listener to follow. Even the simplest story may be misunderstood on the basis of one hearing. The listener's attention may be divided between any number of distractions. Therefore,

a radio news story should be perfectly clear to avoid misinterpretation

Avoid jamming too many thoughts or numbers into one sentence. Generally, sentences that are more than 25 words contain more than one thought and should be rewritten into separate sentences. The same principle applies to dependent and independent clauses. They are often very cumbersome, so write them as separate sentences. Commonly accepted literary techniques, un-usual words and complex phrases, also tend to obscure sentence meaning and you should avoid the use of such.

In broadcast writing, simple words say it best. Choose words that everyone will understand — the announcer as well as the listener. Do not ignore colorful or descriptive words. However, steer clear of flowery phrases and trite expressions that simply take up time and are of no value. Avoid slang and always translate military, technical, legal and foreign terms into simple language.

### Concise

You have concise copy when all unnecessary words have been trimmed away and only those words essential to convey your thoughts remain.

It cannot be overemphasized that broadcast writing is writing for the ear. Listeners do not have the opportunity of "rehearing" your copy, so your sentences should be direct and crystal clear. If your copy is long and involved, you put a strain on the listener and hinder comprehension. This does not mean broadcast writing should be kept at a fifth grade level — but given the choice of being complex or simple, you should choose the latter. Your obligation is to put information into meaningful terms that the "average audience" will understand, and more important, want to hear.

### Complete

For the broadcast story to be complete, you must include in it at least four of print journalism's five "Ws." Obviously, you will normally state **what** happened in your lead sentence. Then you will tell to **whom** it happened, **when** it happened and **where** it happened. **Why** and **how** generally are not critical, although to be complete, some stories will require this information.

### Conversational

Like good conversation, broadcast writing is informal and free-flowing. Write the way you talk. Let the story tell itself. This may sound easy, but it will take some effort in the beginning. A common pitfall is to write a story as it may have been required for an English composition or a print journalism assignment. Broadcast copy is read aloud by the announcer. It is not read by the listener.

The twofold objective of the conversational tone is that first, it allows the announcer to pick up the drift of the story and second, it makes the copy sound "right" to the audience.

A good broadcast writer "listens" to the story being written. When you have finished writing your copy, take it out of the printer and read it aloud to make sure it sounds conversational. Make sure there are no hard-to-pronounce words or combinations of words that are awkward to the ear. Rid your copy of words that might be unfamiliar to your listeners.

### Current

If your story is not current, you do not have "hard" news. News of a perishable nature is usually hard news. If you have a story of immediate news value, you should expedite its completion and delivery to the media. By the same token, if there are new facts or circumstances relevant to your initial release, an update of the initial story should be provided (and marked as an update). This will help ensure currency. It is also helpful if the new or changed elements of the story are identified to reduce possible confusion with information in the original release. You will feel the pressure of meeting deadlines, but remember your credibility is on the line.

### Correct

The hallmark of journalism as a writing art — either print or broadcast — is the accurate presentation of facts. Your finished product must correspond accurately with the facts of the story. In the field you will follow every possible lead to get the facts as well as report them.

### COPY FORMAT

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Recognize the format used in broadcast copy.*

*Normally,* when you write copy for radio, you start with a general "what happened" lead followed by a body of significant facts. This body of information does not have to include **all** the facts of the story — only the most important ones. Radio writing is different from newspaper writing, because the most common newspaper lead is the summary lead (using the five Ws

and H). For radio copy to include the who, what, where, when, why and how in the lead would be too cumbersome. There is no time for nonessential details in radio news items. For the most part, news stories run from 20 to 30 seconds. Spot announcements run from 10 to 60 seconds, and features may run for two or three minutes, depending on the topic.

## THE BEGINNING

The lead sentence must gain the attention of the listeners and orient them on the facts that will follow in the body of the story.

When you begin a story with a person's name or a number, you risk the possibility of that information escaping your listener. Have you ever wished that a newscaster or announcer would repeat something because you either joined the story in progress or did not initially give full attention to what was said? Some writers remedy this by repeating key information later in the story. Unless you are striving for special effect, avoid names and numbers at the start. Do not use an "unknown" name at the beginning. It is much better to say, "A San Diego sailor was cited for heroism today," than to say, "Seaman Phillip Jones was cited for heroism today." Start the story with a general "what happened" lead; then mention the recipient by name.

## NAMES AND TITLES

In the case of names and titles being used together, titles should precede names. It should be "Hialeah Mayor Perfecto Hernandez — not "Perfecto Hernandez, Hialeah Mayor." Alert your listener as to whom you are about to name by prefixing the name with the person's title.

You should refer to federal officeholders by title or as "mister." For example, you would use "President Clinton" or "Mr. Clinton"; "Mr. Gore" or "Vice President Gore"; "Senator Simpson" or "Mr. Simpson."

If a difficult name is unessential, use only the person's title, such as "The Ambassador from Nigeria . .."

## INITIALS

Generally, it is better to omit the middle initial of a person's name unless it is a well-known part of the person's name, such as Howard K Smith, William F. Buckley or John F. Kemedy. The other exception to this rule is when the nature of the story requires further clarification, such as in births or deaths.

## WORDS

In broadcast writing, you must be aware of certain categories of words that are potential trouble areas. These categories are explained in the following text.

### Contractions

In day-to-day conversations, contractions are used rather liberally. Therefore, you should consider using contractions whenever possible because they add to the "conversationality" of your broadcast copy. A definite exception to this rule is the "it will" contraction "it'll," which is awkward when you are trying to read it into a microphone. Additionally, a contraction should not be used when you are intending to stress a particular word or phrase.

### Not

Avoid the use of the word *not* in your copy. "Not" can be dropped out of your copy inadvertently and leave" listeners wondering whether they <u>heard</u> "not." Note the following examples:

| Examples: | USE | AVOID |
|---|---|---|
| | DISHONEST | NOT HONEST |
| | INNOCENT | NOT GUILTY |
| | FORGOT | DID NOT REMEMBER |
| | IGNORED | DID NOT PAY ATTENTION |
| | UNABLE | NOT ABLE |

### Pronouns

There is a danger in using personal pronouns in broadcast copy. When you use "he," "she" or "they," make certain there can be no doubt in the listener's mind to whom you are referring. The ear cannot go back and pick up the identification. Repeat the noun if there may be any question as to whom you are referring.

### Alliterations

Beware of alliterations. When you compose a sentence consisting of several words beginning with the same vowels or consonants, you have an alliteration,

and the announcer has a problem. Note the following examples:

**Examples:** THE WESTERLY WIND WHISTLED WILDLY.

THE LOVELY LITILE LASSES LAUGHED LOUDLY.

## Sibilants

Beware of too many sibilants . . . "s" and "sh" sounds. They tend to create a hissing sound when read aloud Read the following example aloud:

**Example:** THE SIX SOLDIERS STOOD SHOULDER TO SHOULDER.

This problem also arises quite often when the apostrophe is used to show possession. Remember, the sibilant makes the announcer sound like a "snake sliding slowly southward"

## Homonyms

Watch out for homonyms — words that sound alike but have different meanings. The ear cannot tell the difference between "won" and "one" or "bear" and "bare."

## Here and There

Where are "here" and "there" when they are heard by listeners scattered over a wide broadcast area? Make "here" and "there" taboo words when you must refer to a location. "Here," in reference to a location, can be anyplace it is heard

## Libelous Words

So-called "red flag" words can lead to libel. You should be careful not to mistake "colorful treatment" in your story with words like Marxist, illegitimate, deadbeat, addict, and soon.

## Meaningless Words

When you refer to persons, places or things already mentioned avoid using meaningless words, such as "latter," "former" and "respectively." Again, listeners cannot refer back. Likewise, avoid transitional phrases within your stories, such as "meanwhile," "meantime" and "incidentally." They are crutches. Each thought, phrase or paragraph should flow to the next with skillful organization — not with throwaway transitional words. Steer clear of flowery phrases and trite expressions that take uptime and space and are of no value. Also avoid slang, vulgarisms and dialects in news writing.

Always translate military jargon and technical, legal and foreign terms into simple language as in the following examples:

| **Examples:** USE | AVOID |
|---|---|
| ASSIGNED | DETAILED |
| BEFORE | PRIOR TO |
| ENLISTMENT | HITCH |
| IF | IN THE EVENT OF |
| SAID | CLAIMED |
| SENT | TRANSMITTED |

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviations are used in broadcast copy, but only when they are intended to be read as abbreviations. The use of well-known abbreviations is permissible, such as Y-M-C-A, F-B-I, U-S, U-N, A-M, P-M or E-S-T (note hyphens). You may also use MR., MRS., MS. and DR. "ST." may be used instead of "SAINT," in cases such as ST. LOUIS or ST. PAUL.

Do not abbreviate the names of military installations. For example, use FORT (not FT.) KNOX and NAVAL AIR STATION (not NAS).

Never abbreviate names of states, cities, countries, political parties (except G-O-P), days of the week months, titles of officials and address identification, such as street, avenue, drive or boulevard. In addition, avoid starting a sentence with an abbreviation.

A good rule for you to remember when using abbreviations in broadcast copy is — **when in doubt write it out.** Note the following examples:

| Examples: WRITE | AVOID |
|---|---|
| THE SENIOR BALL | THE SR. BALL |
| RALPH SMITH JUNIOR | RALPH SMITH JR. |

| | |
|---|---|
| CAPTAIN KIDNEY | CAPT. KIDNEY |
| AIRMAN HOMEY | AN HOMEY |
| SPECIALIST FIVE HILL | SP5 HILL |
| SEAMAN TURGEON | SN TURGEON |
| CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OTTO | CPO OTTO |
| PETTY OFFICER TINAI | PO TINAI |
| RADIO STATION W-I-N-E | RADIO STATION WINE |
| WORLD WAR TWO | WORLD WAR II OR WWII |
| 80 MILES AN HOUR | 80 M.P.H. OR 80 M-P-H |
| HAWAII | HI |

When you use an unfamiliar abbreviation or acronym that will be pronounced as a word, be sure to spell it out in the first usage. The following example applies:

**Example:** THE NAVY'S CHIEF OF INFORMATION — COMMONLY CALLED CHINFO . . .

## Phonetic Spelling

If you are concerned about mispronouncing names and places, you can limit the possibility by writing a phonetic spelling of the word in parentheses immediately following the troublesome word. You are the author of the release and thus the "authority" for pronunciation of all names and places in the story. Study the following example:

**Example:** CAPTAIN ANTOINE (AN-TWAN) SPOKE TODAY . . .

Make sure the phonetic spelling appears on the same line as the word it represents.

## NUMBERS

Numbers present special problems to the broadcast writer. For the sake of clarity, broadcasters have developed their own style with numbers. Any number that begins a sentence is always written out.

### From One to Nine

For broadcast copy, write out the numbers from ONE to NINE. Exceptions: Sport scores, time (hours, minutes, etc.), dates, addresses, telephone numbers and license numbers.

### From 10 to 999

Use numerals for numbers 10 through 999. **Examples:** 12, 45, 893, 250, 999.

### Thousand, Million, Billion

Borrow from both styles and substitute words for zeroes. **Examples:** ONE-THOUSAND, 15-HUNDRED, 150-BILLION, TWO-TRILLION.

### Conversational Numbers

Make numbers conversational. Round out figures unless the exact figure is essential to your story. For example, $1,527 would become 15-HUNDRED DOLLARS. However, exact numbers must be used if your story deals with deaths or other subjects requiring exact statistics.

### Dates

Write dates as OCTOBER 1ST, 2ND, 3RD, 4TH and 31ST, and use four digit numerals for years, such as 1979 or 1994.

Additional examples of using numbers in broadcast copy are shown in figure 13-1.

## STRUCTURE OF BROADCAST COPY

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Recognize the structure of broadcast copy.*

Broadcast writing, like other styles of writing, can only be learned through experience. Consequently, writing experience can only be gained by writing, writing and more writing.

|  | WRITE | AVOID |
|---|---|---|
| **Money** | 10-THOUSAND DOLLARS | $10,000.00 |
| **Fractions** | TWOTHIRDS | 2/3's |
|  | FIVE-TENTHS | 0 5 |
|  | ONE AND SEVEN-EIGHTS | 1 7/8's |
| **Percentages** | SIX PERCENT | 6% |
|  | ONE-TENTH OF A PERCENT | .1% |
| **Address** | 4951 WEST 14TH LANE | 4951 W. 14 LN. |
| **Telephone Number** | 555-1212 | 5-5-5-1-2-1-2 |
| **Ages** | 12-YEAR-OLD MARY SMITH | MARY SMITH, 12 |
| **Time** | 10:30 THIS MORNING | 10:30 A.M. |
|  | 10:30 A-M | 1030 HOURS |
|  | 6 O'CLOCK THIS EVENING |  |
|  | or 6 P-M | 6:00 PM. |
| **Decimals** | 1l-POINT-25 or |  |
|  | 11-POINT-TWO-FIVE or |  |
|  | 11 AND A QUARTER | 11.25 |
|  | SIX-POINT-FIVE or |  |
|  | SIX AND A HALF | 6.5 |
|  | 12-POINT-FIVE or |  |
|  | 12 AND A HALF | 12.5 |
| **Roman Numerals** | LOUIS THE 16TH | LOUIS XVI |
|  | POPE JOHN PAUL THE THIRD | POPE JOHN PAUL III |
| **Ratings** | THE NUMBER ONE TEAM | #1 TEAM |
| **Scores** | 9 TO 4 | NINE TO FOUR |
|  | 23 TO 6 | 23 TO SIX |
| **Odds** | THREE-TO-ONE | 3-1 or 3:1 |
| **License Plates** | H-L-S 121 | HLS-121 |
| **Military Units** | SECOND FLEET | 2ND FLEET |
| **Height** | FIVE-FEET-FIVE-INCHES | 5 FT. 5 IN. or 5-5 |

Figure 13-1.—Using numbers in broadcast copy.

That is not to say there is nothing you can do in the meantime. To the contrary, there is plenty you can do to prepare yourself for success in this challenging field.

As an aspiring broadcast writer, you should study, carefully, examples of good broadcast writing. In addition, as you begin to write, remember the principles and techniques covered on the following pages.

Writing for the ear can be tricky business. Reducing a complicated issue or concept into shorter and simpler terms is required of a good broadcast writer.

The most successful broadcast writers write the way people talk in their daily conversations. They write as if they were telling the story to a friend. As an experiment, start noticing the lengths of sentences used in normal

conversation. You will even find that we do not always talk in complete sentences. Quite often we speak in fragments, especially if everyone engaged in the conversation is familiar with the subject matter.

Nevertheless, do not get too carried away with this idea. While the strict grammatical rules we have used during years of education might not have a direct application to broadcast writing, they are still valuable. Verb tense agreement and subject-verb agreement, in particular, are still important, especially for the sake of clarity.

## PRESENT TENSE

Since broadcasters report events as they happen, the present tense is the natural tense. Using the present tense in broadcast news gives the copy an air of immediacy and it gives the listener a sense of participation. However, the verb tense that is most natural to a situation will be the most effective. Every story does not have to sound as if it happened the moment before the newscaster went on the air.

## ACTIVE VOICE

Write your broadcast copy in the active voice. The active voice will help you tell your story more quickly and effectively. It also gives the story a sense of immediacy. Active voice provides impact, which is extremely important to a competitive broadcaster. On the other hand, the use of passive voice normally weakens the impact of a sentence. Look at the following example:

**Example:** THE MILITARY POLICEWOMAN SEIZED THE EVIDENCE. (Active)

THE EVIDENCE WAS SEIZED BY THE MILITARY POLICEWOMAN. (Passive)

If you write the copy to sound like old news, then it will probably be treated as no news. Further, writing stories that will be happening far in the future is just as bad.

Do not confuse the active voice with verb tenses. The active voice can apply to past, present and future tenses. Active voice does not necessarily mean the present tense! **Subject-verb-object** is the best indicator of the active voice structure.

## SENTENCE LENGTH

A sure way to improve broadcast copy is to shorten sentence lengths. Long sentences are difficult to understand and are equally difficult for an announcer to read. Remember, the announcer has to breathe! Further, the announcer's ability to breathe naturally will directly affect the pace and phrasing of the story. Again, the sentence has to sound natural. A good average length for broadcast sentences is 20 words. Do not go over 25 words. This is not a magic number, but it does work. Sentences longer than this tend to be saddled with unnecessary clauses or multiple thoughts. More often than not, those additional clauses can be treated as independent phrases. Broadcast sentences starting with "and," "but" or "because," for example, are perfectly acceptable as long as they sound natural.

You should vary the length of sentences also. Do not peg your sentences to that 20-word mark. Try to mix lengths. If all the sentences are the same length, the copy becomes very stilted and sounds like a laundry list. When possible, give the copy a little rhythm, a natural flow that approximates a conversation. The end result of proper sentence lengths is broadcast copy that stands abetter chance of being understood by the audience.

## THE LEAD

As stated earlier, the most important sentence in your broadcast copy is the lead. The lead should grab the listener's attention and set the tone for the rest of the information. Brevity and conciseness play an important part in the lead sentence. The general "what happened" lead is usually the most effective. This lead also can help localize the story. There are several reasons for the "what happened" lead. In broadcast copy, based on the premise of "headline service," there just is not sufficient time for you to deal with all the complexities of a story. Only one or two of the "Ws" might be dealt with at times. Granted, this may sacrifice some of the meaning of the story, but it is also a fact of life. Additionally, the broadcaster is usually working within a given time frame for a story. Some "stories" may be only 10 seconds in length; others may run longer. The copy is not edited by whacking off the last sentence, since the last sentence also is quite important to a broadcaster. The last sentence is often used to make a specific point or as a wrapup.

## QUESTION AND QUOTATION LEADS

Generally, questions and quotations are not used in the lead of hard news stories. Since your listener cannot

see the quotation marks, a quote requires special attention. A question lead, in other than soft news or a feature story, too often sounds like a spot announcement or commercial message.

The rule can be violated if your copy contains a rhetorical question that adds to the attention-getting nature of the lead, as in the following example:

**Example:** HOW COMMON IS THE COMMON COLD? A GROUP OF DOCTORS ARE LOOKING FOR THE ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION.

The same exception to this rule holds true in the use of quotations in a hard news lead, as in the example that follows:

**Example:** "WE WILL BE ON TOP OF INFLATION BY THE END OF THIS QUARTER." THAT PREDICTION WAS MADE THIS MORNING.

## THE BODY

After writing the lead to your broadcast story, you will develop the specifics of the story logically in the body of your story. Logical development is nothing more than an orderly development of the body of your story so that it flows smoothly to an end. Ask yourself, What is the next thing the listener wants to know?

The body of the broadcast news story can be developed in any one of the following three patterns: chronologically, expanding the Ws and descending importance.

### Chronological Development

In chronological development, you narrate the event from the beginning to its conclusion.

### Expanding the Ws

Specifically identify the who, when, where, and so forth, and further amplify the "what happened."

### Descending Importance

After explaining "what happened" in the lead, place the facts in order of descending importance. Remember to place the most important facts first.

Avoid placing unnecessary details in the body of your story. Learn to separate the important from the trivial. Often, you will have to condense, to 100 words or less, a story that a newspaper might use as many as 750 words to report.

## Quotations and Attributions

Earlier, we covered the use of quotations in your lead sentence. What about quotations in the body of your story? The same fundamental guidelines apply. Your listener cannot see quotation marks; therefore, you must alert the listener that a quote is coming up.

In the following example, the listener is alerted with "what he called" and "he said" before the quotes.

**Example:** THE SENATOR ATTACKED WHAT HE CALLED "NEEDLESS AND IRRESPONSIBLE USE OF FEDERAL POWERS." HE SAID, "I BELIEVE THIS IS OUR MOST SERIOUS PROBLEM."

**QUOTE, UNQUOTE.—** TO lead into quotes by the use of "quote" and "unquote" is disconcerting and unconversational. Avoid the use of long quotes. If it is necessary to link the statement with the speaker, use conversational phrases for this purpose. Consider the following example:

**Example:** THE ADMIRAL WENT ON TO SAY ... CONTINUING HIS RE-MARKS, THE ADMIRAL SAID.

**DANGLING IDENTIFICATION.—** Generdly, you should not start a sentence with a direct quote or paraphrase and tack its source on the end. This is known as a dangling identification or attribution. Remember to alert your listener that a quotation is coming up. Start the quote with the source. Consider the following example:

**Example:**

Correct — PRESIDENT CLINTON SAID, "WE MUST CONTROL INFLATION."

Incorrect — "WE MUST CONTROL INFLA-TION," PRESIDENT CLINTON SAID.

## PUNCTUATION

Unlike punctuation for printed newswriting, punctuation in broadcast writing is used to help the announcer read the copy aloud. For example, a comma tells the announcer to pause, and a hyphen helps the announcer to pronounce difficult words.

### The Period

As in any writing, the period indicates the end of a sentence or thought. More periods are used in broadcast writing because broadcast writing sentences are generally shorter and more conversational.

### The Comma

Use the comma to indicate a pause shorter than that of the period. Do not use a comma unless you want the announcer to pause.

### The Dash

Use the dash to set off appositive and other parenthetical expressions. Consider the following example:

**Example:** NATO — THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION — VOTED THIS MORNING.

### The Hyphen

Use the hyphen to help announcers in phrasing difficult words and to instruct them on how to pronounce individual elements distinctly. Note the following examples:

**Example:** RE-ADJUSTED, RE-EVALUATE, CO-OPERATE, RE-ALLOCATE, W-C-O-A, F-B-I, Y-M-C-A

### The Dots

Occasionally, you can use a series of three dots to indicate a pause longer than that of a comma. The series of three dots can also be used for a dramatic effect. Consider the following example:

**Example:** THE JURY FOREMAN ANNOUNCED IN A CLEAR FIRM VOICE . . . "INNOCENT!"

### Parentheses

Normally, in broadcast copy, the material inside parentheses is not meant to be read aloud. Parenthetical material in broadcast copy includes notes to the announcer, such as pronunciation guides, reading rates, and so forth.

### Quotation Marks

Quotation marks often will appear in broadcast copy as a cue to the announcer or newscaster to stress a particular word or phrase, setting it apart from the rest of the sentence. Do not confuse the use of quotation marks as a cuing device with their use for indicating a direct quote. Quotation marks also can be used as an aid to announcers to set off nicknames, titles of books and plays, and so forth. Note the following example:

**Example:** THE SQUADRON — BETTER KNOWN AS THE 'FLYING BLUE DEVILS" — BEGINS ITS SIX-MONTH DEPLOYMENT TODAY

## MECHANICS OF BROADCAST WRITING

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Identify the mechanics of broadcast writing.*

There is more to a successful broadcast news release than a good news peg or interesting story topic. Your release may not even reach the news director's desk if it does not comply with the mechanics of broadcast writing.

When we speak of broadcast writing mechanics, we are referring to all aspects of a news release, other than the actual content of the story. We speak of a basic format and style used by both commercial and military broadcasters.

Your compliance with a few basic rules assures a better chance for your release to make the airwaves and, in turn, tells the recipient of your story that he or she is dealing with a conscientious broadcast journalist.

Always treat a release from your office as official correspondence. You are responsible for the information it contains. In the broadcast copy, you should include all

the facts necessary for the release to be understood and include all administrative information, such as points of contact and release numbers.

Stations will not accept or use sloppy copy. Your broadcast releases should be error-free. Since broadcast copy is designed to be read aloud, it should not appear to be cluttered. Make sure there is sufficient white space, and always type your script double-spaced. Double-spaced copy is not only easier to read but it also provides space for additional information the announcer might want to insert.

## UPPERCASE VS. LOWERCASE STYLE

Broadcast copy can be written (typed) in all capital letters or uppercase and lowercase. There are merits for each style. We are used to reading in uppercase and lowercase, and the patterns of words are easier to distinguish. If both uppercase and lowercase are used, you can also use caps for emphasis. However, the wire services use all caps and the all-capital treatment would conform to that style. Your job is to determine the best style for your releases and use it. Sticking to one style only, within the context of a story, also is important. Be consistent!

## TYPING COPY

When typing broadcast copy, you should set your typewriter/printer margin for an average of 60 spaces per line. This will give you about 10 words per line and will aid you in quickly determining how much copy you have written or need to write. Two to four lines will equal about 10 seconds of copy. Seven to eight lines will yield approximately 30 seconds, and 14 to 16 lines will average about 60 seconds.

Since the size of the print influences readability, your releases should be in 10- or 12-point type.

## TIMING

Timing in newscasts is also very important. Many radio stations run a five-minute newscast on the hour. By the time all the spots, jingles and introductions are weeded out, there is precious little time for news. Tenor 15 seconds in story length can make a difference in whether or not your release will be aired. Your release should be timed, and the time required to read your release should be indicated on the release.

The average announcer reads at a rate of 2 1/2 words per second. Simple multiplication shows a 10-second release averages 25 words and a 60-second story averages 150 words. Remember — we are referring to an "average" announcer; naturally, there are many variables. Radio DJs usually read faster than radio newscasters, and radio newscasters usually read faster than television newscasters.

## PARAGRAPHING

Do not indent sentences in broadcast copy. It is a waste of space when writing on only half a page. Paragraphing is not used in broadcast writing, since the treatment of a topic can usually be handled in one paragraph anyway. Always set margins flush-left, so your copy will appear as one block.

Consequently, you should not hyphenate or divide a word at the end of a line. If the whole word does not fit, simply drop down to the next line. Likewise, do not split a sentence between pages in your broadcast story. It makes it difficult for the announcer to maintain continuity.

## NUMBERING PAGES

If your broadcast story is more than one page, number the pages consecutively. For example, if your copy is three pages long, number the first page 1 of 3, and the last page 3 of 3. Write page numbers in the upper left-hand corner of the page.

## (MORE)

When a story takes more than one page, center the word (MORE) under the manuscript portion at the end of each continued page.

## THE END

Indicate the end of your broadcast copy by centering three number symbols (###) under your manuscript column.

## ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION FOR BROADCAST RELEASES

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Identify the administrative information required on broadcast scripts released to the media.*

For obvious reasons, it is necessary for you to identify yourself and your organization on broadcast releases. You should also include a telephone number in case the civilian broadcaster needs to ask any questions relative to the story.

## FOUR-UNIT HEADING

Each broadcast script will have a four-unit heading, located below the administrative information but above the actual story matter. Though not read aloud, this heading tells at a glance the basic information the broadcaster requires in scheduling your story for a newscast. The four-unit heading contains the following components:

- **Slugline.** The slugline serves as a title or headline of the story.

- **Date.** The date on the script is the date of its release.

- **Copy length.** The copy length tells the recipient how long it will take to read your broadcast copy.

- **Release line.** The release line indicates the type of broadcast release (covered in the following text).

## RELEASE LINES

All items submitted to radio stations should contain specific release information. One of the following release methods is recommended:

- **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.** Use on hard news items.

- **FOR GENERAL RELEASE.** Use on soft news, features or spots that do not require immediate airing before its value is lost.

- **DO NOT USE AFTER (Time and Date).** Use on spots or news items about events that run for a limited time.

- **HOLD FOR RELEASE UNTIL (Time and Date).** Use on advance releases.

Figure 13-2 is an example of a completed radio news release.

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**NAVAL AIR STATION SAMARA**                                                            **456-5071**
**POINT KENT, FLORIDA 32505-5484**                                            **DSN: 922-5070**
                                                                                              **FAX: 456-5072**


**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:**                      **LCDR LEE MAZZILLI (PAO)**
                                                           **JO1(AW) JUAN AGUSTO (APAO)**


**OFFICIAL   NEWS   RELEASE**
**(FOR RADIO)**

**PAGE 1 OF 1**

**PROGRAM 75 (WORD COUNT)**                                **RELEASE NO. 36-94**

**SAMARA  HELICOPTER  CRASH**
**KILLS FOUR (Slugline)**                                  **(Release Date) July 21,1994**

**30 SECONDS (Copy Length)**                **(Release Line) FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

A MILITARY HELICOPTIER CRASHED TODAY AFTER TAKING OFF FROM NAVAL AIR STATION SAMARA, KILLING ALL FOUR CREW MEMBERS ABOARD. THE S-H THREE-H "SEA KING," ASSIGNED TO HELICOPTER COMBAT SUPPORT SQUADRON 297, WAS EN ROUTE TO A TRAINING EXERCISE ABOARD THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER U-S-S QUERINO (KAY-RINO) WHEN IT WENT DOWN AT THE NORTH END OF THE MAIN RUNWAY. THE NAMES OF THE DEAD ARE BEING WITHHELD PENDING THE NOTIFICATION OF RELATIVES. THE NAVY IS INVESTIGATING THE CRASH.

# # #

**Figure 13-2.—Completed radio news release.**

## EDITING BROADCAST COPY

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Identify the method of editing broadcast copy.*

Unlike print journalism, in which copy usually passes through several reviewers, broadcasters do not usually exercise that type of control. Depending on the deadlines of the broadcast facility, they might rewrite your release entirely. On the other hand, the local newscaster could simply adopt the old "rip and read" policy and read your release "cold." Naturally, the second method does not speak too highly of the news staff, but unfortunately, some commercial and military broadcasters continue to do this.

Absolutely clean copy — free of mistakes — is the rule for copy prepared for release to radio stations. Sloppy copy is disconcerting to any announcer.

For in-house productions, editing marks may be used sparingly, but only those editing marks easily understood by an announcer are acceptable. Do not use print media copy-editing marks. Use only the broadcast editing methods covered in the following text:

- **Correct misspellings** by blackening out the misspelled word completely and printing or typing in the correct version above it. Do not attempt to correct a letter within a word. Broadcast copy has no editing mark to correct a single letter within a word. Rewrite the entire correct word as in the following example:

COLLIDED

EXAMPLE: THE SHIPS ▮▮▮▮ IN HEAVY FOG.

- **Insert words or phrases** by printing or typing the desired words above the line and indicate the point of insertion. Note the following example:

GOVERNMENT

EXAMPLE: ...LARGE QUANTITIES OF SUPPLIES...

- **Separate run-together words** by using a single line, as shown in the following example:

EXAMPLE: THE FIRE STARTED IN THE ENGINE. . .

- **Delete a word** by blackening out the word and bridging the gap. Consider the following example:

EXAMPLE: THE TEAM ▮▮▮ APPEARED. . .

- **Delete words on more than one line** by using a curved line to reconnect, as shown in the following example:

EXAMPLE: THE BOSTON SAILOR ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ RECEIVED A FULL PARDON.

## SPOT ANNOUNCEMENTS

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Identify the two types of radio spot announcements and recognize the techniques used in writing them.*

The sustaining point of a commercial radio station is the commercial. Although neither the Navy nor the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) use them, commercials have a valuable counterpart in Navy public affairs. That counterpart is the spot announcement. Figure 13-3 shows a basic spot announcement format.

Spot announcements are usually 60 seconds or less and come in two forms — the selling spot and information spot. Both are covered in the following text.

### SELLING SPOT

The selling spot is designed to make the listeners take some type of action as a result of the ideas you present to them. The spot also can be used to change attitudes. Examples of these are "Be there!," "Do it now!" and "See your recruiter today."

There are many ways for you to structure the selling spot. One way is the three-pronged approach — **attention, appeal** and **action.** First, you form your basic idea and attention-getting lead sentence. Then you present the merits, advantages and appeal of the idea. Finally, you motivate your listener to take action to gain the benefits you were promoting in the spot announcement.

**Attention**

A lead such as "Now you can lose weight while sleeping!" is almost an automatic attention-getter for a large segment of your listening audience. This type of lead draws the listeners into your message by provoking their interest and attention. Copy directed toward emotional and motivational drives is copy that sells and should be slanted toward a particular group that needs a particular product.

Spots selling baby food, for example, are directed at mothers who are concerned with the health of their babies. These spots emphasize the healthful ingredients of the baby food. In the same way, the slant toward a particular group is used by the Navy in recruiting. Such spots are aimed at young people in the age group between 17 to 25, and words, such as security, travel, education, missiles and electronics, are used as attention-getters.

When the attention portion is directed toward the listener's desires, aspirations, dreams and ambitions, you will take the first step toward getting that individual to listen to the appeal and the action portions of your spot.

**Appeal**

"Why don't you begin to enjoy the finer things in life?" You have probably heard that appeal in one form or another. In the appeal portion, you present the selling material — the message you want to convey to the audience. One thing for you to remember is to avoid cramming too many points into a short announcement. Keep it simple and stay with the subject.

For example, if you start off talking about travel as the attention-getter in a recruiting spot, do not drift off into education or some other subject in the same announcement. Another word of caution — do not

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OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE
(FOR RADIO)

PAGE 1 OF 1

PROGRAM 76 WORDS                                              RELEASE NO. 54-94

RADIO SPOT FORMAT                                            September 4, 1994

30 SECONDS                                              FOR GENERAL RELEASE

AMERICANS HAVE GROWN UP WITH COMMERCIALS AND SPOT ANNOUNCEMENTS. THE "SELLING" SPOT INFORMS THE LISTENER, THEN TELLS HIM TO DO SOMETHING. THE "INFORMATION" SPOT SIMPLY INFORMS. THE SELLING SPOT HAS THREE STEPS...ATTENTION, APPEAL AND ACTION. THE INFORMATION SPOT USES ONLY ATTENTION AND APPEAL. THE ACTION STEP IS WHERE YOU TELL THE LISTENER TO DO SOMETHING. IT CONTAINS SIX WORDS OR LESS. NONE OF THE OTHER SENTENCES...IN EITHER SPOT...SHOULD BE MORE THAN 15 WORDS.

# # #

Figure 13-3.—Spot announcement format.

promise the impossible. Be sincere and honest with your audience.

**Action**

"Buy U.S. Savings Bonds each payday."

"Learn how you can travel the world with the U.S. Navy."

These statements invite action and tell the listeners what they can do. The action step gives the listener a definite course to follow. The step should be forceful, combining invitation and demand, and it should compel the listener toward a positive action. Remember, the action step is designed to motivate the listener to buy, join, write or perform according to the action you have suggested in the message.

The success of any spot announcement as a selling device is measured by the listener's response to the product advertised. Figure 13-4 shows an example of a selling spot announcement.

## INFORMATION SPOT

The information spot is designed purely to inform. In this type of announcement, you are not trying to get the audience to do anything or to change attitudes. You simply want to give them information.

The information spot differs from the selling spot in purpose and structure. In writing the information spot, you begin with **attention** and follow it with **appeal.** Because no response is desired from the audience, you have no need for an action step. Your job is to compose the message in a clear, concise form and to get the maximum amount of interesting information into the brief 10, 20, 30 and 60 seconds

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**O F F I C I A L   N E W S   R E L E A S E**
**(FOR RADIO)**

**PAGE 1 OF 1**

**PROGRAM 76 WORDS**

**RELEASE NO. 59-94**

**AIR SHOW**

**November 9,1994**

**30 SECONDS**

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE**
**(DO NOT USE AFTER 11 A-M NOVEMBER 14)**

TWO SPECTACULAR AIR SHOWS ARE SCHEDULED THIS WEEKEND AT THE SAMARA NAVAL AIR STATION. THE EVENTS ARE BEING STAGED NOVEMBER 13TH AND 14TH AS A SALUTE TO AMERICA'S VETERANS. THE NAVY'S WORLD FAMOUS "BLUE ANGELS" WILL HEADLINE BOTH SHOWS. INTERESTING STATIC DISPLAYS AND EXCITING AERIAL ENTERTAINMENT ARE IN STORE. THAT'S SATURDAY AND SUNDAY AT THE NAVAL AIR SAMARA. THE SHOW BEGINS BOTH DAYS AT NOON...AND ADMISSION IS FREE. COME EARLY AND SEE IT ALL.

### # # #

Figure 13-4.—30-second selling spot announcement.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE LETTERS U-S-O STAND FOR? THEY STAND FOR THE UNITED SERVICES ORGANIZATION...A GROUP OF HARD WORKING MEN AND WOMEN WHO MAKE A HOME AWAY FROM HOME FOR MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY VOLUNTEER WORKERS MAN THEIR STATIONS ALL OVER THE WORLD IN AN EFFORT TO KEEP MORALE HIGH. NO MATTER HOW NEAR OR FAR FROM HOME...THERE'S ALWAYS A U-S-O CENTER NEARBY. THESE CENTERS OFFER ENTERTAINMENT OF EVERY DESCRIPTION...FROM PING PONG TO FREE BROADWAY SHOWS. THE U-S-O IS INDEED YOUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME.

# # #

Figure 13-5.—30-second information spot announcement.

you may be allotted. Figure 13-5 shows the information spot announcement.

## SPOT WRITING TECHNIQUES

In writing either a selling or information spot announcement, you should remember the following four techniques that will pay dividends in quality:

1. **Plot the pitch carefully.** Before you put a word on paper, you have to know the type of audience you want to reach. If the audience is in the lower income bracket, gear the spot to the special needs and wants of this group. One approach could be the economic security angle; another is the "get-ahead-in-the-world" appeal. On the other hand, audiences in small rural towns might find the travel theme exciting and interesting. Spot writers must study prospective audiences if they are to be successful at communicating with them.

2. **Look for new target audiences.** Although the stress in writing may be recruiting, you should be prepared to write spots that will sell the public on attending a command public visitation, a parade or a demonstration. These special events appeal to many audiences. Some spots might be directed toward fathers, children, teen-agers or even to mothers in the audience.

3. **Develop a direct, personal writing approach.** Even though the audience may consist of several thousand people, the copy is directed at one person. Make that individual feel that the message is personal. Address the listener in terms of "you," "you've," "your" Canal "you're." Always refer to the listener in singular form and in a friendly manner.

4. **Select words carefully.** Write spots in the active voice with such positive and colorful verbs as follows:

go, see, take, try, get, visit, ask, call, be and buy. Be conversational, but avoid slang. Keep your words simple, and do not try to impress the listener with an extensive vocabulary. Speak to the listener in the language that person knows. You also should avoid special military terms and abbreviations that are unfamiliar to the listener.

### Format and Preparation

Whether you are writing a spot announcement for an NBS detachment or a local commercial station, you should adhere to the following general rules concerning format and preparation:

1. **Follow the appropriate style.** Write your spot following the style guide of the station. A station manager might reject your spot if it is not in the style his announcers are used to reading.

2. **Submit clean copy.** All announcements you submit to radio stations should be free of errors.

3. **Submit the proper number of copies.** Check to see how many copies of an announcement each station needs.

4. **Meet deadlines.** If a station manager asks you to have a spot at the station by a given time, do not miss the deadline. Your violating this rule is the best way for you to keep your copy from ever reaching the airwaves.

### Timing the Spot

Timing is extremely important in spot writing. On commercial stations, you will be competing with other public service agencies for free air time. Naturally, a station can allot only so much time for public service announcements.

If you use music or sound effects in your spot, you must remember to take these into consideration in your timing. A 30-second spot with 10 seconds of sound effects averages four to five lines of copy. A stopwatch will help you in timing spots.

Whenever you write a spot, it is best that you include a "kill date" and cutoff time so the station will know when to stop using it. A spot heard over and over, day after day for along time, soon gets dull and irritating to the listener. Also, if you have a spot telling people to visit your command on Sunday, it would certainly sound ridiculous to hear it the following Monday.

## RADIO ANNOUNCING

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Identify the techniques used in radio announcing in terms of preparing and delivering copy, and the responsibilities of the announcer.*

Some Navy broadcasters forget that their primary responsibility is to communicate. It is essential that you, the announcer, know what the stories are about before you try to read them on the air. Announcers who only read words are doing exactly that — reading words and not communicating. Remember — it is not the listener's responsibility to interpret what is read.

### PREPARING RADIO COPY

There are certain aspects of preparing your radio copy that you must do before you go on the air. These include phrasing and marking your copy.

### Phrasing

The bulk of the communication process centers on phrasing. People do not talk in words; they speak in phrases. The phrasing process is done during normal conversation, without thought. Beginning newscasters have some trouble transferring this natural process when delivering their copy. The best way to see if your broadcast copy is divided into phrases is to read the copy aloud. Identify whether the phrases answere one or more of the five Ws and H. If the phrase does not answer one of the five Ws and H, then it is not a complete thought

### Marking Copy

Broadcasters use specific oral punctuation marks to divide their copy into phrases. There is disparity between written punctuation and oral punctuation. English teachers teach written punctuation and follow strict rules of usage. Oral punctuation adds accent and tells the announcer when to breathe, without disrupting the natural flow, phrasing and the importance of a sentence.

As stated earlier, most phrasing problems occur because announcers do not understand what they are reading. They are not breathing at the right time or not marking their copy properly. Most announcers adapt easily to the following system:

/ (The single slash mark means you are to pause and take a short breath.)

Use the single slash as an oral comma, just a short pause in the flow of words from your mouth — not a complete stop like a period.

// (The double slash mark means you are to stop reading and take a deep breath.)

The double slash is an oral period. This is a big stop and is the end of a sentence. This is the time to take a good breath for the next sentence.

   /
 / (The triple slash mark means you are to pause
 / for emphasis, but do not breathe.)

This mark has nothing to do with breathing. It is just a sign to you, and it means pause for emphasis. You might use it for difficult names, quotes or a number in the copy you know you want to emphasize.

An example of radio copy with oral punctuation marks is shown in figure 13-6.

WASHINGTON INTELLIGENCE SOURCES SAID TODAY THAT TUVALU NOW LEADS THE

WORLD IN ESPIONAGE ACTIVITIES.// ACCORDING TO AN UNIDENTIFIED STATE

DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL, / THE SMALL SOUTH PACIFIC ISLAND NATION, / LEAD BY PRIME

     /
MINISTER / JEFFREY TINAI (TIN-EYE), /IS BEHIND SEVERAL RECENT INTELLIGENCE-

    /
GATHERING ACTIVITIES / AT NAVY BASES IN THE FLORIDA PANHANDLE.//

**Figure 13-6.—Radio copy with oral punctuation marks.**

When you are marking copy, make sure you do not change the meaning or context of the story. However, most stories may be marked in more than one way without changing their meaning. How you mark them will depend on your personal style.

## DELIVERY

The way you speak or imply the meaning of a word may change the whole context of that story. You, the announcer, are the most important element in the information process. The fewer barriers introduced in transmitting the information, the clearer the information is received and understood by the receiver or listener.

### Variety

The announcer should have a voice that conforms easily to the spirit and intention of the assignment. No matter what the subject or script, the announcer must inform the listeners of his sincere belief in the content and the natural excitement (vitality) of the occasion. All meanings should be clear. Being bored should not detract from natural vitality. All the slight changes in mood and feeling, directed by the words and situation, have to occur as effortlessly as they do in speaking with a close friend. Discreet changes in the voice appear naturally when they are truly felt by the announcer.

The human voice is able to reflect all conceivable traces of mood and meaning. Subtle natural changes in vocal pitch, time, quality and force make this possible. Speech without thoughtful distinction tells only a shade of the full mood and meaning and may express monotony or give inaccurate information to the listener. The announcer should feel the mood and know word meaning if he is to show sincerity in his voice.

### Articulation

In conversation, we naturally drop sounds and slur words. The reason for working on articulation is to make the sounds of words clear, so that the announcer may be understood.

Clean articulation is the most difficult aspect of voice and diction. Its intent is not to eliminate accents and regionalities, but to enable the announcer to communicate with everyone.

The following are a few drills and methods for dealing with some common articulation problems.

**MUSHY SOUNDS.—** If your speech sounds sloppy, chances are, you are not opening your mouth enough. Have another person watch you read or use a mirror. Notice if your lower jaw moves. If it does not, this could be the cause of the problem. Announcers who tuck their chin into their chest to make their voice deeper are creating articulation problems. Read your copy overemphasizing the lip, tongue and chin movement required to make each sound, then reread the copy normally. Keep your script at eye level and keep it up while reading so you cannot tuck in your chin.

The same theory applies to the announcer who does not move his lips. Read the copy, overemphasizing each lip movement, then read your copy again normally.

Another solution for mushy sounds is the "pencil method." Place a pencil sideways to the back of your mouth and firmly between your teeth. Take your script and slowly read it through, articulating all the words. Then reread your script again normally. This will help you correct any mushy sounds.

**DROPPING SOUNDS.—** The ends and the middle sounds of words are commonly eliminated in speech. You should pronounce carefully each syllable of each word, overstating each sound. Then say the word normally.

**Examples:**

stand-ing/standing (not "standin")

work-ing/working (not "workin")

help-d/helped (not "help")

mix-ed/mixed (not "mix")

spa-ed/sped (not "speh")

tah-t/tot (not "tab")

nah-t/not (not "nod")

mos-t/most (not "mos")

de-vel-op-ment/development (not "development")

gov-ern-ment/government (not "govment" or "government")

syl-a-ble/syllable (not "sylble")

**NEW ENGLAND "R".—** Announcers with this problem change the "R" sound in "car" to an "ah" sound (cah). The "ah" sound is easier to say since it does not involve moving the lips or the tongue. Read several words with "Rs" in them, being careful to hit the "AH UR" sound. Try the following example:

**Example:** Parker parked the car outside the card store.

**SOUTHERN VOWEL DISTORTIONS.—** Some people from the South have a drawl that makes their speech difficult to understand. They hold the vowel (a,

e, i, o, u) sound so long that it slurs into the next sound. For example, "I'm" becomes "Ahhh'm."

To correct this, clip the sound and make it shorter. Run through the following examples, carefully articulating each sound.

**Examples:** just (not jist)

get (not git)

for (not "fer": replace the word on your copy with the word four or the number 4)

to (not ta: replace the word on your copy with the word "two")

style (not "stahl": I'm going to get just two styles of paper instead of getting the four styles you asked for.)

**THE "S" SOUND.**— The "S" sound is the most difficult sound to correct. The general rule is: do not mess with an "S." Take the microphone and place it out of the "S" air zone, so when you talk you are talking across the microphone instead of directly into it.

### Rate and Transitions

Changes in the tempo (rate/speed) and the use of pauses (transitions) while speaking are essential to understanding. Normal speech rate varies from 80 to 175 words per minute.

A steady rate of speed will produce monotony. In general, changes of rate help reflect the weight of the issue. Important information is slowed; less important topics may be increased in speed.

As stated earlier, the oral punctuation mark gives the announcer an opportunity to pause. The pause makes the division of thoughts and the segmenting of those thoughts possible. Without the vocal pause, the meaning of the topic would be haphazard and hard, if not impossible, to follow. The oral pause also gives the announcer time to restore his breath supply naturally.

### Authority

Announcers, and in particular news people, require authority in their voices. It is that special something that tells the listener, "What I have to say is important." Newscasters either have it (authority) or they do not — there is no substitute. In some cases, because of a naturally higher pitch, women newscasters may suffer from authority problems more than men, but it is not a problem unique to women.

The following techniques may help if you are lacking authority in your voice:

- **Take charge.** You must have a thorough understanding of your copy. It is up to the newscaster to tell his audience what it needs to know. You must adopt an attitude of, "This is important — listen to me!"

- **Add volume.** Intensifying your vocal tone to establish a sense of authority may be effective. Try this by standing about 10 feet from a wall. Deliver your copy loud enough so that your voice hits the wall and is reflected back. You do not have to yell, but you should be loud enough to be heard clearly 10 feet away. This is called vocal projection.

- **Monitor your volume.** Have another person stand across the room from you as you read the copy. Every time your volume drops, have that person tell you to speak louder.

### Stumbling

All newscasters occasionally stumble over a word, and they should not worry about it as long as it is only occasional. When you experience a lot of stumbles, the cause is usually the brain getting ahead of the mouth. Here are a few solutions:

- **Concentrate on what you are reading.** Your mind should be on your copy and nothing else. Avoid distractions.

- **Use the index card technique.** If you area speed reader or read unusually fast, place a 5- by 7-inch index card on the line you are reading. As you come to the end of that line, move the card to the next line. This technique will slow you down enough so you do not overread and it will help you focus your attention on the line you are reading.

- **Use parentheses to mark any phrases that give you trouble.** Do not mark individual words — only mark the phrase.

- **Preread your copy at least twice for familiarization.** If your copy surprises you while you are reading it on the air, you are not ready to read You should be able to tell, in rough form, what the stories are about without looking at the copy.

- **Avoid back tracking to correct a stumble.** Keep going and do not call attention to the mistake.

Some people worry so much when they make a mistake that they make additional mistakes. Once a mistake is made, **FORGET IT.** Concentrate on what is coming, not what is gone. Your audience does not expect perfection. (One exception to this rule is if the stumble changes a fact in a story. If this happens, take a second or two to regroup, then correct the error. You also can correct the error after a spot break, if time allows.)

- **Have your eyes checked by a doctor.** Unfortunately, eyesight deteriorates with age and even the best announcers cannot read words they cannot see.

### Speedy Delivery

Speaking too fast is a common problem for beginning announcers. As the announcer, you can correct this problem by understanding that not everyone is able to think as fast as you can talk. If the listener cannot understand you because you are speaking too fast, then you are wasting the listener's and your own time.

The following are a few simple tricks that will help you slow your delivery:

- **Write the words *SLOW DOWN* all over the margins of your copy in a bright-colored ink.** This will remind you throughout the newscast to keep your speed under control.

- **Use the three-step reading system.** Read the copy through once, as fast as possible. Then read it as slowly as possible, over-articulating and reading one word at a time. Finally, read the copy somewhere between the two previous speeds. During the third reading, make sure you are in the presence of someone who can tell you to slow down when you start to pickup speed.

- **Follow the "five-minute rule."** The average rate of delivery is 15 lines per minute. The actual rate should be somewhere between 14-16 lines per minute. Limit yourself to 60 lines of copy for a five-minute newscast. Make sure you finish at exactly the five-minute mark. The only way to reach the time mark and not have dead air is to slow down.

- **Use the eraser technique.** Place a medium-sized art eraser between your front teeth. Try to read the copy while holding the eraser firmly in place by biting down. You must articulate and be able to be understood while you are reading. It is almost impossible to talk fast and still be understood while you are holding the eraser.

- Mark your copy for breathing points. Breathe wherever you see a mark

### ANNOUNCER RESPONSIBILITIES

As you can tell, radio amounting is hard work. The listening audience may associate the word *glamorous* with the broadcast industry, but the fact is — radio (like television) is an exacting business and announcing emphasizes professionalism.

For every announcer who has made it to the "big time" and who has become a celebrity in the civilian world, there are 100 good announcers who, in addition to their on-airtime, perform many other station duties. There are announcers in a lot of small stations who work the audio consoles, write last-minute commercials, rewrite news copy, check equipment and do anything else required of them to make the station work well. This is exactly what will be asked of you as a Navy broadcaster — you must be a **generalist.**

Furthermore, during your on-air experiences, you will realize that an isolated slip or flubbed line is almost inevitable. This is true even for the veteran announcer. However, if you make (too many errors, you will be looking for anew job. The key to success is experience, and a good announcer drills diligently in the never-ending quest for perfection.

### Required Qualities

The qualities usually considered necessary in a professional radio announcer are a good voice, little or no regional accent, clear diction and accurate pronunciation. Quite often, your voice affects the audience's opinions about programs.

A resonant voice, the best diction, and even the best pronunciation will not help the announcer who mechanically reads lines and fails to project a feeling of sincerity. In effect, the announcer must have a good radio personality and make his voice reflect such.

### Adaptability

Your personality is reflected in your voice. If you are not genuine, the listener will take note quickly. Changes throughout the program day make it essential that an announcer be capable of changing his delivery to fit the content and mood of the particular program.

No matter the type of program or its theme, most listeners enjoy hearing a voice that offers friendliness, naturalness, sincerity, integrity and vitality. Announcers, of course, usually seek to work in an area where they

perform best. Some announcers are best at news, some at country and western music, some at rock 'n' roll, and soon. In short, you must be like a chameleon. You must be able to conform to the many variations of style that the average broadcast day will demand of you. You should set high standards for voice control, diction and pronunciation; then strive constantly to live up to those standards. This is a never-ending, ever-learning process. However, the satisfaction you will get from being an effective announcer is well worth the effort.

## PRODUCING A RADIO FEATURE

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Detail the elements needed to produce a radio feature.*

In radio, you are primarily responsible for all stages of feature production. In commercial radio, particularly in smaller markets, the DJs of the station are responsible for producing features. The same thing applies at NBS detachments. Once you are assigned a production, the entire process, from researching the subject to putting it on tape, belongs to you.

In this section, "radio feature" and "audio production" are used interchangeably.

### SELECTING MUSIC

Music is used to set the mood for a production. It can create a feeling of excitement, tranquility, suspense or sadness. The following four types of music can be used in audio production:

- Theme
- Background
- Bridge
- Fill

### Theme

If you are doing a series of spots on a particular subject or using a particular character, theme music will lend identification to that subject or character. Avoid using familiar songs as themes; for example, "Gonna Fly Now" from the Rocky movie series or the theme from American Gladiators. These selections tend to distract the listener and ultimately lessen the effect of the message.

### Background

Background music helps set the mood of the feature production and it increases audience appeal. A voice-only production can be very boring, especially if it is just one voice. For example, a few strains of dramatic fanfare might heighten listener anticipation of a story climax. Conversely, you could use light, melodic music to support a comical subject. There is instrumental music to fit almost any mood. It is just a matter of listening to the selection, perceiving the emotion or mental image it creates and matching the appropriate mood to your subject.

When you are selecting music for background, instrumentals are preferred over music with vocals. Vocal songs tend to distract the listener from the message of the production. Vocal music may be used, but only if it contributes to the message. When vocals are used, level balance becomes critical so that the music does not override the message.

Background music should be unrecognizable and match the subject. By adding the right background music, you add to the aesthetic appeal of the feature.

### Bridge

Bridge music connects or "bridges" two ideas or thoughts. Bridge music, also called transitional music, was used in radio theater to change the scene. A short instrumental fanfare can signal a change in topics — or, a new scene can be introduced with a short musical theme that suggests a particular location.

### Fill

Fill music is often called "pad" music and is usually an unrecognizable instrumental song. If your feature production is required to be a certain length, you can use fill music to eat up time at the end. This also allows the person airing the production an opportunity to transition to the next program element gracefully with less chance of lapsing into dead air.

### SELECTING SOUND EFFECTS

The use of sound and sound effects works much the same way as music. The purpose of sound effects is to enhance the spoken word.

Creative use of sound can help develop a vivid picture in the mind of the listener. The success of an audio production often depends on the mental picture conjured up by different sound effects. Good examples are the spots produced for the Radio Ad Bureau promoting radio advertising. By using sound effects, the producer created a visual picture in the listener's mind by doing such things as draining Lake Michigan, filling

it with chocolate and topping it off with a 750-foot mountain of whipped cream and a 10-ton maraschino cherry. This versatility is available for any radio production and is limited only by your imagination and ability to locate or create sound effects.

The following are the three main types of sound in audio production:

- Real

- Simulated

- Rerecorded

## Real

Real sound effects are produced in the studio using the actual source, such as papers shuffling or scissors cutting cloth. You are limited to the availability of the particular item to make the desired sound.

## Simulated

Simulated sound effects are those that do not recreate reality, but merely suggest it. Crinkling cellophane can suggest a campfire, and running your thumb across the teeth of a comb can suggest casting a fishing line.

## Prerecorded

Prerecorded sound effects are those available on tape or compact disc (CD). The two types of these are the ones that create a sound picture, such as a city street or factory, and the ones that create individual sounds, such as footsteps or the opening of a door. When using prerecorded sound effects, you are limited to the recordings available in the tape or CD library of your station.

## USE OF THE VOICE

The voice is the essence of most radio productions, because it conveys the message. Each announcer interprets copy according to his style of delivery and the type of delivery needed to communicate the message effectively. Voice characterizations may be used if it is appropriate to the production, but make sure the characterization is realistic and portrayed well.

## BASIC PRODUCTION CONCEPTS

There are many ways to put an audio production together. The technique you decide on will depend upon the complexity of the production, the equipment available to you and your ability to put it all together.

Although there are many variations to the process, audio productions usually are formed around the following four basic concepts:

- Beginning to end

- Prerecorded voice

- Prerecorded music and sound effects

- Segmenting

## Beginning to End

When you are using this method, everything is done nonstop, mixing all the elements onto tape. This means recording the narration, background music and sound effects at one time, as they are called for in the script. Because this method requires many rehearsals and considerable production skill, it is not recommended for the inexperienced broadcaster.

## Prerecorded Voice

If you choose the prerecorded voice method, put one element on an audiotape cartridge (known in the industry as a "cart") and mix the other elements in as you go. This method is best used for a production that requires only a few supportive elements. The prerecorded element is the narration, allowing you to concentrate on mixing the other effects as they are needed. You can add other elements later.

A disadvantage to this method is that it limits the announcer's flexibility to interpret the script as it relates to the accompanying music or effects. Therefore, prerecorded voice is not the recommended method of production. It is used sparingly and, generally, only for "straight" copy requiring little interpretation.

## Prerecorded Music and Sound Effects

Although time consuming, the prerecorded music and sound effects method works best in a complicated production, especially if the producer is inexperienced. By placing all the elements onto cartridges and then mixing them on a reel-to-reel tape recorder, you can "build" sound elements by layering one element on another using multiple recordings. The possible combinations of cartridge-to-reel, CD-to-cartridge and cartridge-to-cartridge are many. This method also allows the announcer to adapt the vocal mood to the mood created by the other elements.

## Segmenting

The segmenting method allows the broadcaster to take manageable portions of the production and produce them using the beginning to end method. These separate segments then can be edited together to form a complete production. This method is good for very long and complicated productions but it requires both editing skill

and production time. For shorter productions, the prerecorded music and sound effects method is recommended.

## RECORDER AND REPRODUCER SETUP

Before beginning production, you should make sure all the recorders and reproducers have calibrated levels. Commonly, a 1000-cycle tone is used to set all the VU (volume-units) meters (both in record and reproduce modes) to 100 percent. The tone series as a reference point for aligning the different recorders you maybe using. Most studios have the tone hard-wired into the control board or the control room patch panel. Other production studios have the tone prerecorded on a cartridge.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

In audio production, there are times when an ordinary sound is not enough to convey the message or the intent of the script. Accordingly, you may enhance or change a sound electronically to produce an entirely different effect.

The five most commonly used special effects are as follows:

- Filtering

- Equalization

- Reverb and echo

- Phasing

All of the audio effects covered in this section are produced electronically using studio equipment (except phasing).

### Filtering

A filter is an electronic circuit designed to pass only selected frequencies and to eliminate all others. An audio signal filtering device is often built into the control board or wired into the studio patch panel. Using filters, you can reduce the lows and enhance the highs of a microphone signal to simulate a voice coming from a telephone or radio speaker. Filtering is most commonly used during the recording process.

### Equalization

Equalization is similar to, but has more exacting results than, filtering. An equalizer is a piece of equipment that alters the frequency response of an audio signal, allowing for the modification of specific portions of the overall signal. In other words, whereas equalization does not totally eliminate frequencies — it does vary their playback level. You can use an equalizer to match audio originating in-studio with on-location audio by adjusting specific audio frequencies.

Another common use of equalization is to correct acoustical problems that occur at remote recording locations.

### Reverb and Echo

The terms *reverb* and *echo* are often used interchangeably, but are two distinctly different sounds. Echo is defined as the repetition of sound and is often achieved by using a reel-to-reel recorder. Reverb is the persistence of sound until it fades away and it is usually achieved by using a cartridge machine. The reason for the difference is the distance between the record and playback heads on the two different types of machines. The heads of a cartridge machine are closer than those of a reel tape machine. The closer the heads, the more persistent or reverberated the sound. The farther apart the heads, the more repetitive the sound, giving an echo effect.

To get either effect, just open up that particular pot (potentiometer) of the machine while you are recording on that same machine. The more you open the pot, the greater the effect. To achieve the echo effect on a reel-to-reel machine, you must set the machine function switches to both playback and record. This is not necessary when using a cartridge machine because it only has a record switch. Of the two effects, reverb can be distorted more easily. Both effects can be overdone to the point that the message cannot be understood. Therefore, you should use these effects with caution.

### Phasing

Phasing is that spacey, wavelike sound you sometimes hear on the voice for rock concert promotions. This effect adds depth to the sound and is usually used to enhance the voice. It is achieved when two identical audio sources are played back at slightly different start times.

To get a better idea of what phasing is, try it out for yourself. First, record a piece of copy, then make an identical copy of it on another tape. Record both copies onto a third tape, starting the first two a split second apart. If you start them too far apart, you will have an echo. If you start them too close together, the phase effect will not be pronounced enough.

You can produce other effects in the studio using the speed adjustments on the reel-to-reel machines. You can also edit the audiotape, taking out the pauses in the voice and making it sound as if two different sources were

used for the same voice. Your experimenting with the equipment might even lead to an audio effect that is unique. Let your creativity guide you.

Do not overuse studio effects; they can become tiring to the ear and may cover the intended message of the production An advantage of radio is that it lends itself to the audience's imagination better than television does. Through the clever use of studio effects and radio sound, you can exploit this advantage to take your listener on a trip to Hawaii while he never leaves his living room.

## ORGANIZATION

Organization is the key to making the most of production time. Think the whole process through before you walk into the studio. This will reduce frustration. If you are not prepared and things do not work the way you want them to, frustration sets in and the production becomes that much more difficult.

## QUALITY CONTROL

When completed, the production has made a drastic transformation from a producer's imagination, to a script, and finally to a recorded tape or cartridge. Throughout this gradual change, certain internal checks were applied to make a high-quality product according to aesthetical and technical standards commonly recognized by broadcasters and the specific requirements of the local station.

Quality control is the responsibility of every broadcaster and will mean the success or failure of the objectives of the production.

## PRODUCTION PHASES

The internal checks and balances previously mentioned come during the following-three phases of the development of the production:

- Reproduction
- Production
- Postproduction

### Preproduction

Preproduction is the gathering of all the supporting elements called for in the script and auditioning specific music and sound effect cuts to make sure they are appropriate. Many times, what the scriptwriter envisioned on paper turns out to be inappropriate in the audio production. The music (tempo, key, melody theme) should convey to the listener a mood that supports and enhances the objective of the production. Your ear is the best judge of whether a piece is aesthetically correct for the production, and it should be obvious if there is a mood mismatch. This is a good time to audition any background music that contains vocals.

There is no absolute rule against using vocal songs as long as it is important to the message and the levels (narration and music) are set correctly. The background music, with or without vocals, is acceptable only if it remains **in the background.** It is easy for the music to end up overpowering the message. Your using vocals for background music means you will have to make a close check on the level balance during the production and postproduction phases.

Check all supportive elements to make sure they meet technical broadcast standards. The script may call for a sound effect that is only available on an old tape that is distorted when played. In that case, find a similar effect on a newer, cleaner tape or create the effect yourself. If actualities from other sources are used (interviews, news inserts, etc.), they also must be produced cleanly and be understood easily.

Review the script and note any unfamiliar words or names. Look up the pronunciations of any that maybe a problem for you. If another voice is called for, make arrangements for someone else to be in the studio at the appointed production date and time and have copies of the script prepared for him.

Furthermore, before you begin the production phase, know and understand the format requirements for your product. In other words, is the final package to be on reel tape or cartridge? What speed should the production master reel be recorded? On what is the timing requirement? When these technical questions have been answered, you are ready to go into the studio.

### Production

Once in the studio, make sure all the required equipment is in good working order. Follow the locally established procedures in setting up and checking the audio console and equipment needed for your production. It is best to bulk erase any production tapes you use. Using tapes that still have audio from other productions can make tape cuing difficult and may lead to the unintentional airing of unwanted audio. It is a good idea that you label all tapes used in the production process so you can find the element you need easily.

Follow the script as it was approved. Unless you are the writer, do not make substantial changes to the content without first checking with the author. There may be a good reason for the script appearing as it does.
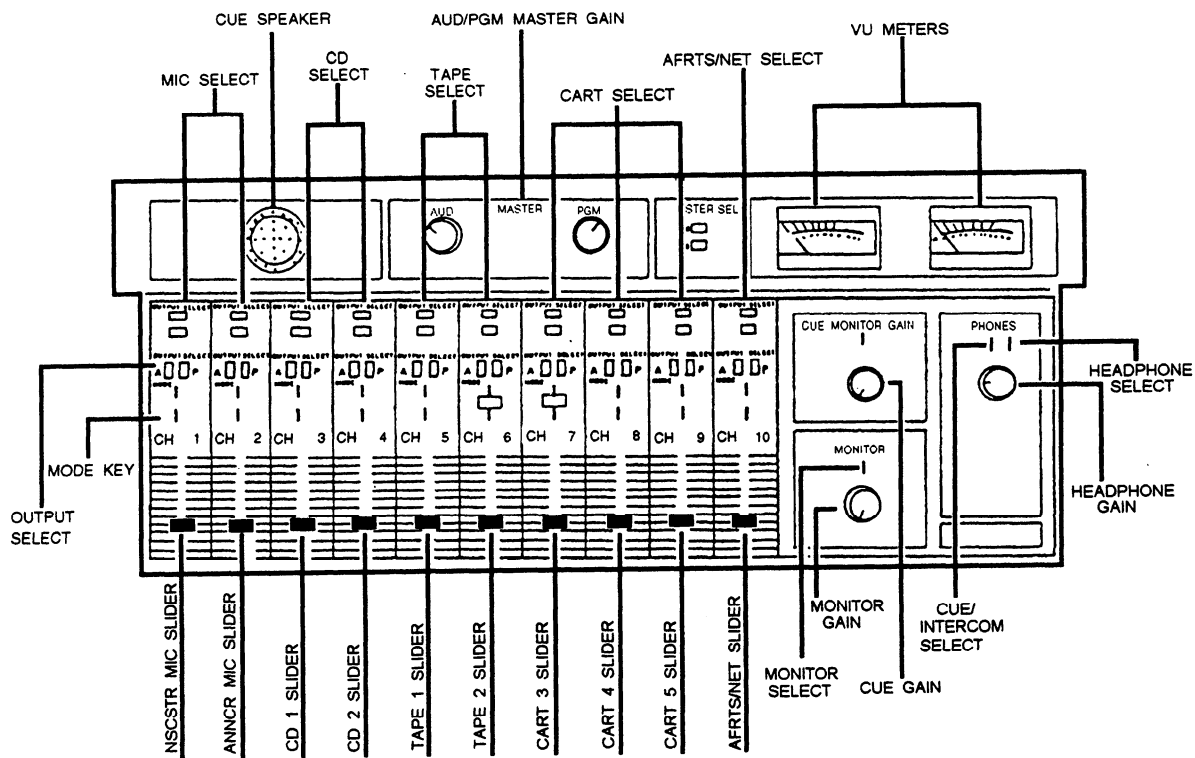
**Figure 13-7.—Audio console.**

Monitor the record and playback levels constantly during the mixing process. When putting several elements together, listen closely in the headphones to the level balance. Remember, do not let supporting sound override primary audio. Check the master tape recording level to make sure its average peaks are between 80 and 100 percent on the recorder VU meter. If you thoroughly completed the preproduction organization, it will be easy for you to follow the script during the production phase.

**Postproduction**

You should listen to the finished product and make sure the production accomplishes its intended purpose. Listen for quality checks you may have missed in earlier development. Pay particular attention to the audio levels and quality of the final recording. If the spot or feature is not satisfactory, mix it again and correct the problem. Check to be sure the production meets the allotted time requirement.

When the final product passes all the quality control checks, label it according to local procedure and turn it over to your supervisor.

## RADIO CONTROL ROOM EQUIPMENT

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Identify the equipment in a radio control room.*

Radio broadcasters find out early in their careers that broadcasting involves more than just announcing. Broadcasters working in the radio medium also must be proficient at operating radio control room equipment. In this section, we will cover the various pieces of equipment that make up a radio control room.

## AUDIO CONSOLE

Even though all audio consoles are operated in the same basic manner and perform the same primary functions, their capabilities are not always the same. Differences among consoles are obvious from one model to the next, but even consoles of the same make and model often are locally engineered to perform various additional functions.

Before you operate your console for the first time, take the time to learn its various intricacies. Figure 13-7 shows atypical audio console.

The audio console connects the microphones, cartridge machines, reel-to-reel tape recorders/

reproducers, remote lines, CD players and other audio equipment into one system.

In the following text we describe the controls on the audio console shown in figure 13-7:

- **Microphone selector buttons.** There are two identical controls for the operation of microphones on the audio console (charnels one and two).

- **CD selector buttons.** Charnels three and four control CD players one and two. Because everything is read from left to right, CD one is selected by depressing selector button number one on channel three. Selector button number two on channel four operates CD two.

- **Reel-to-reel (tape) selector buttons.** Tape one is programmed through selector button number one on channel five and tape two through selector button number two on charnel six.

- **Cartridge selector buttons.** Three cartridge machines are programmed through charnels seven, eight and nine.

- **AFRTS/network selector buttons.** Channel 10 receives audio originating from the AFRTS Broadcast Center (BC) and major radio networks.

- **Output selector buttons.** All 10 channels on this audio console have the following two output options: audition and program.

- **Mode keys.** This key has three positions. When a sound source is not being used, the key is maintained in the neutral (off) position. Pushing the key up into the audition/program buss places your sound source on the air. Moving the key into the cue position allows you to hear the source only in the studio and not on the air.

- **Cue/intercom selector.** This selector allows you to cue a sound source over the cue speaker or permits broadcasters to communicate between studios.

- **Cue gain control.** This control regulates the volume of the cue speaker.

- **Headphone selector.** This control is used to select the audio source that is heard through the headphones. The three positions are audition, program and cue.
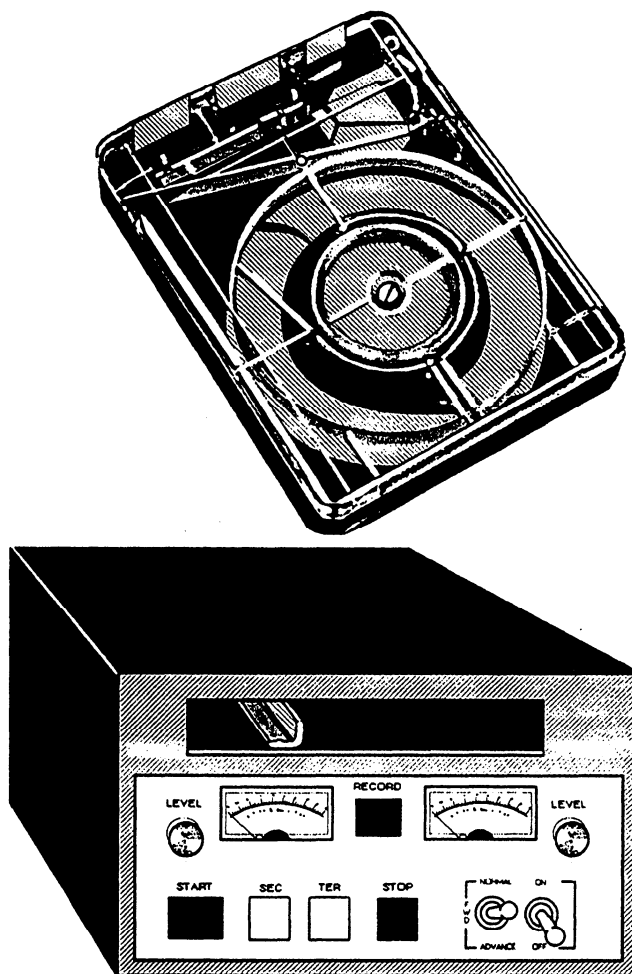


Figure 13-8.—Audiotape cartridge and cartridge playback machine.

- **Headphone gain control.** The headphone gain control is located immediately below the headphone selector. Set this level to hear your program sound source clearly, but not at a point where sounds within the studio are drowned out.

- **Monitor selector switch.** The monitor selector switch is used to select which audio source is heard on the "air" monitor speakers located in the studio. The three positions are audition, program and air.

- **Monitor gain control.** This control regulates the volume-of the monitor speakers.

- **Audition/program master gain controls. DO NOT ADJUST THESE CONTROLS!** They control the output of the entire audio console and are set by the station engineers.

● **VU meters.** The VU meters give the only visual reference to sound loudness. As described previously, the correct meter readings are achieved" when average music and voice peaks fall between 80 and 100 percent. Allowing the meter to run constantly in the red, known as running "hot:' can create sound distortion and is <u>never</u> acceptable.

## SLIDERS

Sound sources connected to your audio console are controlled by the use of pots, called sliders. The output selected above the sliders gives you the option of listening to the sound source in audition or program mode. Program is used **only** when a sound source is aired Audition allows you to listen to a sound source to make sure it is properly cued and the appropriate sound levels are set on the VU meter.

## AUDIOTAPE CARTRIDGE AND CARTRIDGE MACHINES

You will use audio tape cartridges and cartridge machines for most of the spot announcements of your station Cartridges come in various lengths, from 10 seconds to five and a half minutes. Inside the plastic casing of the cartridge is a continuous tape loop that provides sound immediately when played. Because the tape must play through before it stops and recues itself at the cue pulse, you should select a cartridge that is slightly longer than the recorded material.

Before you air a spot announcement on cartridge, perform the following steps:

1. Make sure the cartridge is properly seated in the machine.

2. Set the output selector to audition.

3. Start the cartridge and set the output level (using the appropriate slider) on the audition VU meter.

4. Allow the cartridge to play through until it recues.

5. Once the cartridge recues, place the output selector in the program mode. The spot announcement on cartridge is now ready to air.

An audiotape cartridge and cartridge playback machine are shown in figure 13-8.

## CD PLAYER

You will use CD players for production purposes. Commercially, the CD and CD player have replaced records and turntables. This is because CDs are easier to store and their sound quality is superior.

The CD is a 4 3/4-inch plastic platter that is scanned by a laser beam positioned above the disc. Unlike records, CDs do not skip and its 500th play will sound as flawless as its first. However, you should handle a CD only around its edges and store it in its protective case (jewel box). A CD and CD player are shown in figure 13-9.
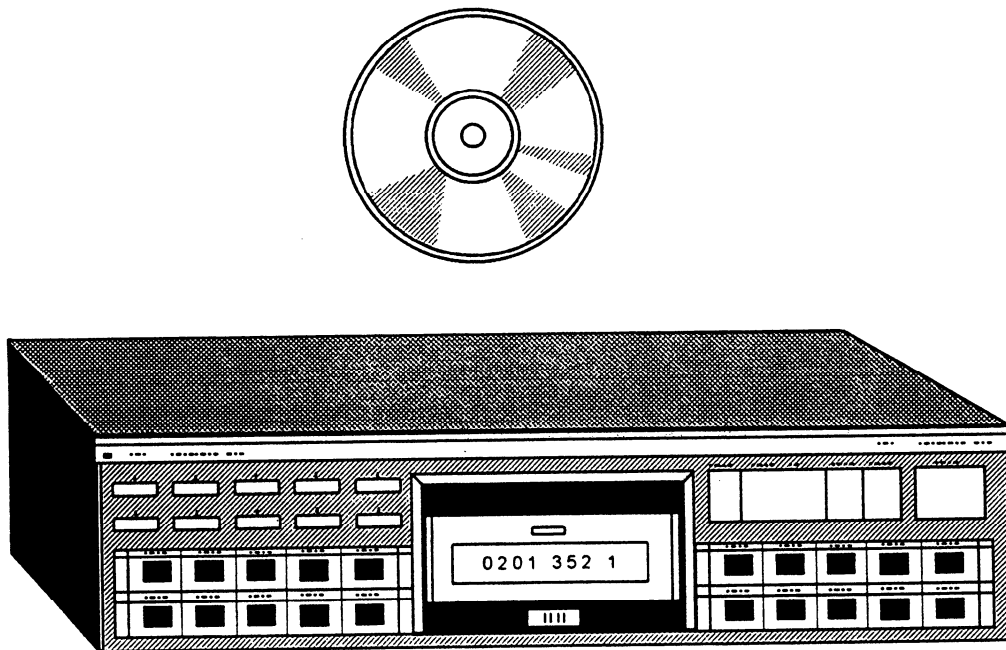


Figure 13-9.—Compact disc (CD) and CD player.

SUPPLY REEL    AUDIO HEADS    TAKE-UP REEL

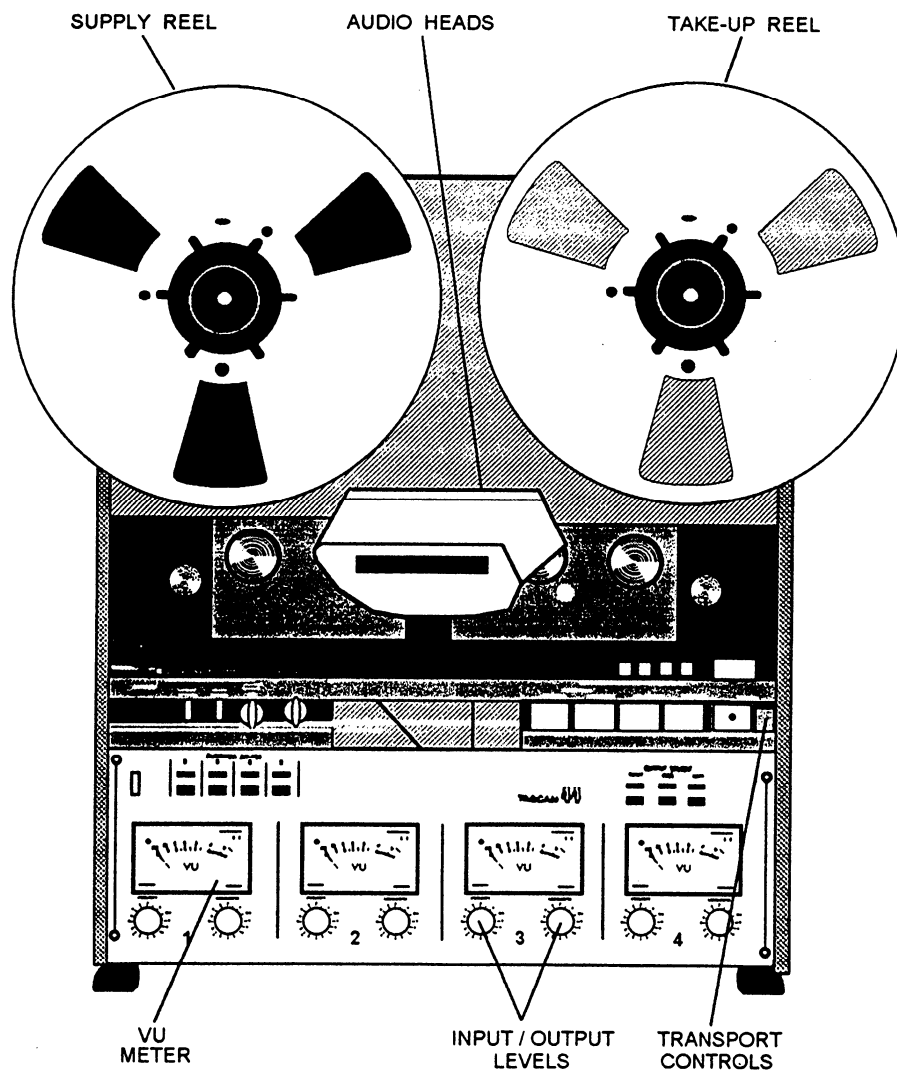VU METER    INPUT / OUTPUT LEVELS    TRANSPORT CONTROLS

Figure 13-10.—Reel-to-reel tape recorder/reproducer.

## REEL-TO-REEL TAPE RECORD/REPRODUCER

The reel-to-reel tape recorder/reproducer (fig. 13-10) uses magnetic tape supplied on spools. Standard audiotape is one-quarter of an inch wide and it is available in several reel sizes and tape lengths. You must thread the tape onto the machine where it passes the tape heads at either 7.5, 15 or 30 inches per second (ips). Faster tape speeds will give you better recordings.

If you have a sound source on reel tape, load the supply reel onto the left spindle so the tape feeds counterclockwise. Load a take-up reel of the same size on the right spindle. Unwind several feet of tape and thread the machine according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Once you have properly loaded the recorder, you must accomplish the following steps:

1. Set the speed selector of the recorder to the appropriate position.

2. Play the tape and adjust the playback level on the VU meter of the recorder to zero (if the tape has a tone recorded on it). If there is no tone on the tape, adjust the playback level to fall between 80 and 100 percent on the W meter of the recorder.

3. Place the output select of the recorder on the audio console to audition. Using the slider for the recorder, set the sound levels on the audition VU meter to fall between 80 and 100 percent.

4. Once you have set the sound levels, cue the tape to the audio portion to be played. Stop the tape at the

first audio of the selection to be played; then slowly back the tape up to the precise start point of the audio. From this point, back the tape up about half an inch to give the recorder enough space to get up to speed. The tape is now properly cued and the sound levels are set.

**NOTE:** Cuing distances vary from recorder to recorder. Experiment with your machine to get the optimum distance.

5. Place the output select on the audio console into the program mode. The reel-to-reel source is now ready to air.

## MICROPHONES

Setting up your studio microphones before airtime is a relatively simple task. Sit down at the console in the same position you will use when producing or working on air. Place the microphone four to six inches from your mouth at a 45-degree angle. It is possible to set a microphone level by placing the output select in the audition mode and setting the level on the VU meter by using the proper slider. Once you do this, place the output select back into the program mode. Repeat this procedure for the newscaster's microphone.

## RADIO CONTROL ROOM HINTS

Exactly how you get the source "on the air" is simply a matter of choice and experience. Each operator develops his own method of preparing for and actually airing a sound source, and each method has its pros and cons that you should take into account.

The following are some radio control room hints for you to consider.

- Be certain the correct source is aired at the specified time.

- Monitor the VU meter while the source is playing and adjust the volume, if necessary, to maintain the proper VU level.

- If you play two or more sources at the same time, make sure the primary source does not drown out the secondary source(s). You can do this by running the primary source at about 80 percent and the secondary source(s) at about 50 percent initially, adjusting for a final overall output of between 80 and 100 percent.

- If the sound source goes off the air unexpectedly and cannot be restored within a reasonable amount of time (say within five seconds), fill the time according to your station's emergency procedures.

- **Practice!** To understand your radio control room equipment fully, you will need hands-on experience. The more time you spend practicing studio operations, the sharper your mechanical skills will be.

## EDITING AUDIOTAPE

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Identify the method used to edit audiotape.*

One of the advantages of working with reel-to-reel audiotape is that you can edit program material easily. You can remove mistakes and unwanted material from your program to from a cohesive, polished product. The editing process also will allow you to adjust the run time of a program by shortening or lengthening a taped segment. In addition, you may add taped material to another taped program through the editing process.

## EDITING PROCESS

The most common method of editing audiotape is for the unwanted material to be cut out. Although this method has been in place since the introduction of magnetic recording tape many years ago, the "cut and splice" technique is still the preferred editing method of the broadcast industry. The manual reel-to-reel tape edit is simple, requires no expensive or exotic equipment, and depending on the skill of the editor, can produce a clean and extremely accurate edit.

### Finding Edit In/Out Point

You can edit tape manually by taking the following steps:

1. Thread the tape onto the recorder, then place the recorder into the playback mode.

2. To get a better idea of what and how much editing you will need to do, preview the material. This will save considerable time when editing. You can plan your edits by listening to the order of topics or subject items as they occur on the tape. listen for and note statements that may be in poor taste, against policy or unnecessary. Be aware of items that do not maintain continuity or that are illogical. Consider editing out long pauses that do not add to the program. Time the material to see how you can adjust the program length.
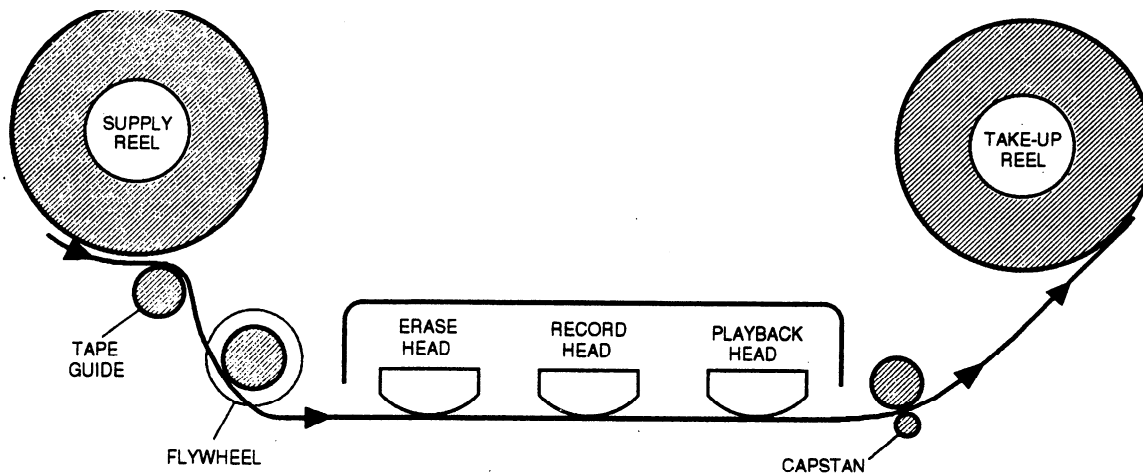
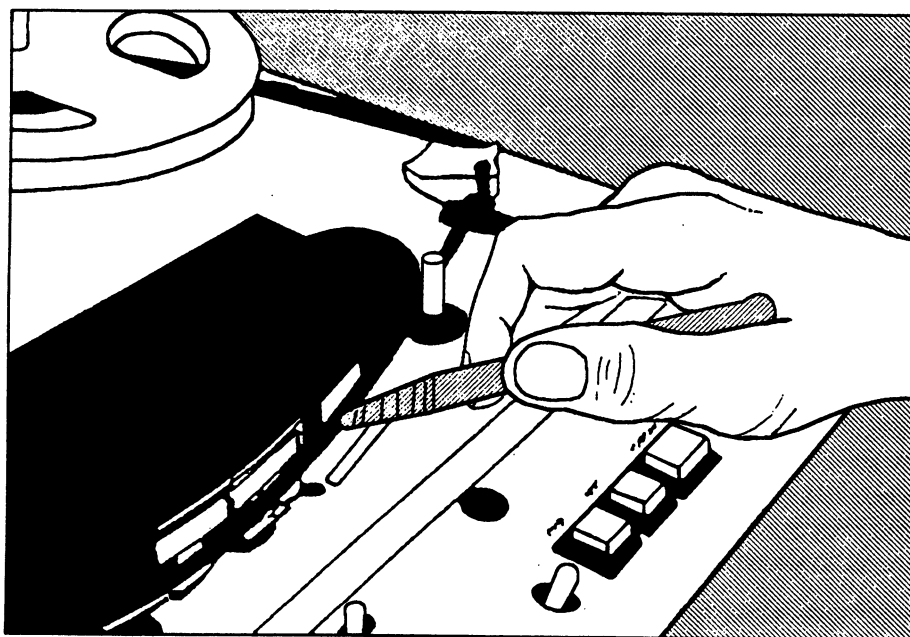**Figure 13-11.—Reel-to-reel tape recorder head sequence.**



**Figure 13-12.—Marking the edit in point on the playback head.**

3. Locate the segment of material you want to edit. To do this, you will be concerned with one of three tape heads on the machine. With few exceptions, the tape head sequence (from left to right) is **erase, record** and **playback** (fig. 13-11). If there is material that needs editing or if the tape does not meet the timing requirements, listen to the audio and find the point where you want to start your edit. Slowly wind and rewind the tape manually to find the exact **edit in** point. Make a vertical mark on the audiotape at the **edit in** point in the center of the playback head (fig. 13-12). You can do this easily by using a china marker (grease pencil). Make sure you limit your mark to the surface of the tape — stray marks on the tape head could damage it.

4. Find and mark the **edit out** point using the same procedure as for locating and marking the edit in point.

When you mark the edit in and out points, always allow for natural pauses (breathing). If only the bad audio is edited out, there will be an abnormally long pause left on the tape at the point of the splice.

**Cut and Splice**

Once you have located and marked the edit points, you can cut out the desired edited material. To do this, you need a sharp razor blade, an edit block and a roll of audio splicing tape.

If the editing block is not permanently mounted on the base of the recorder, set up the block so that the
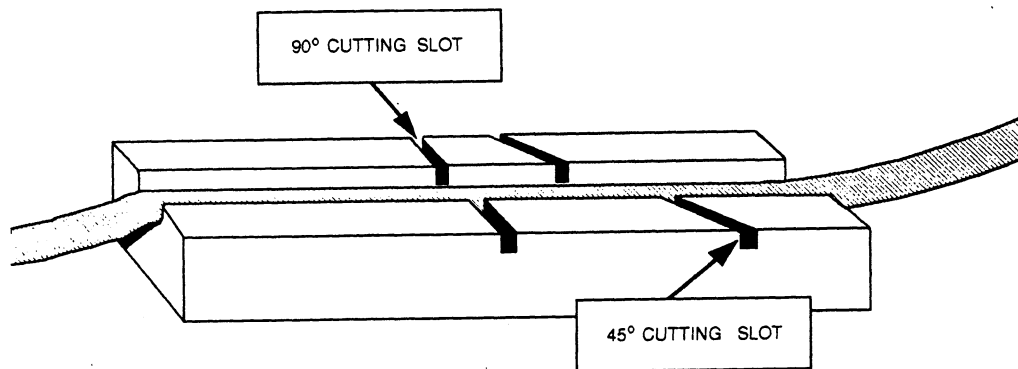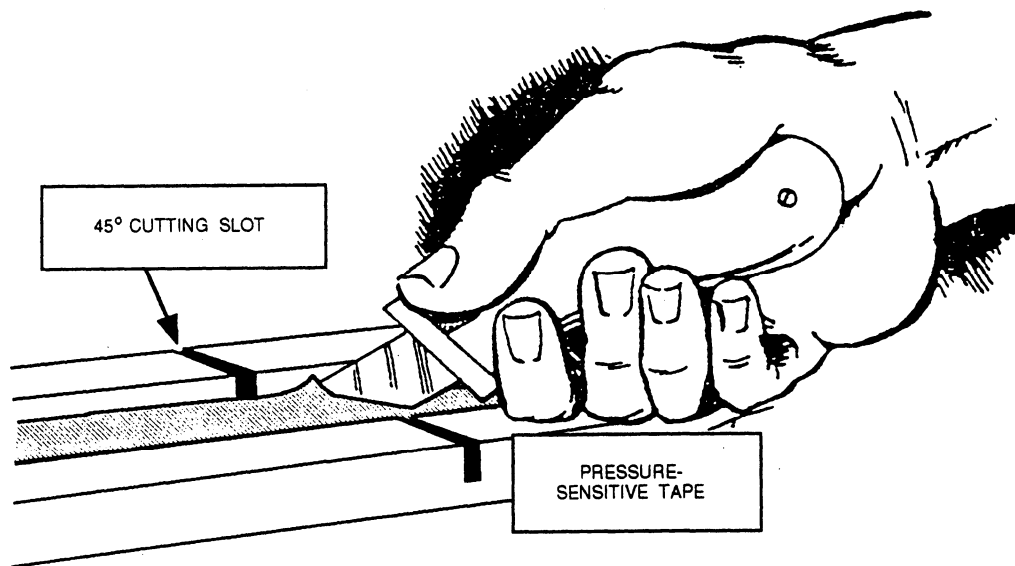
Figure 13-13.—Audiotape editing block.



Figure 13-14.—Applying splicing tape.

45-degree cutting slot is to the right of the 90-degree slot, as shown in figure 13-13.

Cut and splice the tape using the following procedure:

1. Rewind the tape to the **edit in** point. Make sure you unwind enough tape to be placed into the editing block. Press the tape, oxide (dull) side down, into the edit block so it is held in place by the grooved slots of the block

2. Center the marked **edit in** point over the 45-degree cutting slot in the edit block, as shown in figure 13-13.

**NOTE:** The 45-degree slot is most frequently used, because it is a stronger bonding edit than one made from a 90-degree vertical cut. The 45-degree angle cut also reduces the chance of an audible popping sound at the edit point during playback.

3. Cut the tape carefully with a razor blade, using the diagonal slot as a guide. Remove the tape on the left side of the cut.

4. Place the recorder into the edit mode and push STOP once you find the **edit out** point. Unwind enough tape to locate the **edit out** point and center it over the 45-degree cutting slot. Cut the tape carefully at the edit mark with a razor blade.

5. Once you make the final cut, remove the loose tape from the left side of the cut and set it aside until you check the edit and run time of the program. You may need to splice in this section later.

6. Push the remaining tape ends together in the edit block so there is no gap or overlap. Join the two ends using a piece of 7/32-inch splicing tape about one inch in length (fig. 13-14). Press the splicing tape firmly over the cut.

13-31

**NOTE:** Always use tape manufactured for audio-tape splicing. Any other types of tape may damage the tape heads.

**Review the Edit**

After you complete the edit, review it to make sure it meets the requirements of your station. Use the following procedure:

1. Review the edit by first removing the audiotape from the splicing block and examining it for defects. If a defect is present, remove the splicing tape and repeat the edit.

2. Rethread the tape onto the recorder and play the edited segment. Listen for popping or clicking sounds. Also, pay attention to the continuity and aesthetics of the program. Make sure conversations flow smoothly and the content of the message is not changed or destroyed. Be alert for policy violations and adherence to time requirements. If you note any problem areas, repeat the editing process as needed.

3. Once you are satisfied with the finished product, label it according to the procedures of your detachment and give the tape to your supervisor.

## RADIO PROGRAM MATERIALS

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Identify the radio program materials available from AFRTS.*

This section briefly describes the various radio program materials available from AFRTS-BC. It is important for you to know the contents and abbreviations for each package, since you will rely on them for most of your day-to-day radio programming needs. If you need more detailed information, see the *Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) Program Materials,* DoD Directive 5120.20-R, Appendix F.

AFRTS-BC ships 80 hours of radio program materials to their AM outlets per week. More than half of the weekly package consists of current music programs featuring major-market DJs. The music heard on these programs is the same as played on many popular music FM stations across the United States. Another portion of the weekly package consists of recordings of the latest hits according to various music charts. To provide the widest possible variety of radio programming, AFRTS-BC includes religious, talk, drama, variety and other program formats in the weekly package.

FM stations also are furnished with program packages. The stations receive a basic FM package along with taped stereo music shipments consisting of vocals and instrumentals.

## RADIO UNIT PACKAGE (RU)

The radio unit package (RU) contains approximately one-half (30 hours) of the total radio programming package and is generally undated. It is routed through circuits of one or two outlets. In the RU package you will find weekly religious shows, dramas, features, variety shows and information "fillers." Under normal circuiting (routing), one unit is available for broadcast and two other RUs are either at the station or enroute.

## RADIO PRIORITY/LIBR4RY PACKAGE (RP/L)

Teaming with the RU package to provide full AFRTS radio entertainment is the radio priority/library package (RP/L). This weekly package has two parts — the radio priority package (RP) and the radio library package (RL).

### Radio Priority Package (RP)

The RP package contains approximately 45 hours of timely (dated) materials, including chart music programs, and is shipped to each authorized radio station for immediate broadcast. Because the RPs contain timely material, they have no value after they are aired and include instructions for immediate local destruction. RPs are authorized only for stations that receive the RU package.

### Radio Library Package (RL)

The RL package contains approximately six hours of individual recorded music cuts on CD for retention as permanent library material. Because RL material is designed for permanent library retention, shipments continue during temporary periods when other programming may be suspended. A computer floppy disk, containing artist and title information, is included in each shipment. The CDs in the RL package are accountable items and periodic inventories are mandatory.

**40-C**

Stations authorized to receive the RP/L package also receive the American Top 40 and the American Country Countdown programs as a separate RP shipment labeled 40-C. Like the RP unit, materials in 40-C are destroyed after airing.

## RADIO TAPE PACKAGE (RT)

The radio tape package (RT) is a weekly audiotape shipment consisting of approximately 84 hours of RU, RP, 40-C and special information items for authorized ships and selected shore-based stations. Packages contain 14 7-inch tapes recorded at 3 3/4 ips in a fro-track monaural format that can be run on simple automation or manual playback systems. At the end of each recorded track, a 25-hertz tone cues tape reversal and automatic switching to the next track, enabling small radio operations with the proper equipment to automate a full broadcast day. RT units are returned to the duplication contractor after airing so the tapes and shipping containers can be recycled. Outlets authorized to receive the RT package will not receive the RU, RL or 40-C shipments.

## RADIO MATERIALS (RM)

Occasionally, your station may receive the radio materials (RM) shipment. It may contain entertainment or information programs, holiday specials, special features, spots or production aids. The type and timeliness of the material will determine whether the RM is shipped on CD or tape and which outlets will receive it.

## FM TAPE SERVICES

The three packages available under the heading of FM tape services are FM library (FML), FM program (FMP) and FM religious (FMR). These tapes provide alternate programming for authorized outlets with second broadcast frequencies or cable distribution channels. Tapes are recorded in four-track stereo at 3 3/4 ips on 10 1/2-inch reels. Cue tones are prerecorded on the tapes for automation equipment.

### FML

The FML unit is a monthly shipment of roughly 24 hours of library music in three formats — beautiful music, adult contemporary and country. It is designed for permanent retention by the station.

### FMP

The FMP unit is a quarterly shipment consisting of about 26 hours of hosted stereo programs.

### FMR

The FMR unit is a religious music program service that includes 12 55-minute hosted programs in each shipment.

## HANDLING INCOMING SHIPMENTS

When a shipment of radio program materials arrives at your station, make sure you take the following actions:

- Inspect the exterior of the packages. Make sure the boxes are not torn, ripped, crushed or otherwise damaged.

- Double-check the address to make sure your station is entitled to receive the shipment.

- Carefully open the boxes or containers.

- Locate the packing list and inventory the contents of the packages against the packing list.

- Check each tape or CD label. Make sure that they match the packing list.

- Inspect each item for damage. Look for scratches and defects.

- Note all shortcomings on the packing list.

- Sort tapes and CDs according to the types of units (RP, RU, etc.).

- File the tapes and CDs according to local guidance.

## GENERAL HANDLING GUIDELINES

All tapes and CDs must be handled with care. Careless practices, such as leaving CDS on a table without protecting them, result in scratches or chips. A tape left in the production studio unmarked and out of the box is an invitation for someone to erase it. Therefore, tapes and CDs must be cared for according to standard industry techniques and practices.

Cleanliness is paramount. Areas where tapes and CDs are used and stored should be free of dust, high

humidity and excessive heat. Keep your hands clean and avoid touching the surfaces of tapes and CDs with your fingers.

Store tapes in their original boxes. The boxes should be clearly labeled and stored in the appropriate location. You should store tapes vertically to keep the reels from bending and to prevent packing them tightly. The ends of the tapes should be secured to the reels with masking tape before storing them. Do not use transparent adhesive tape because the adhesive can damage recording tape.

Handle CDs so the surfaces are not exposed to fingerprints, dirt, and so forth. As mentioned earlier, you should always store CDs in their protective jewel boxes.